



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development



Darwin Plus: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2015)

Project Ref No	DPLUS026	
Project Title	British Virgin Islands MPA and hydrographic survey capacity building	
Country(ies)	British Virgin Islands	
Lead Organisation	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)	
Partner(s)	United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO), National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPT)	
Project Leader	<i>Koen Vanstaen (Cefas)</i>	
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>18th November 2015</i>	<i>HYR2</i>
Project website	<i>n/a; updates available on Twitter: @KVS1979</i> <i>Data can be explored at http://tinyurl.com/DPLUS026</i>	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up) (max 500 words).

In line with the project plan presented with the project application, the first 6 months of this project has seen a large amount of activity. Below progress is discussed in relation to the activities listed in our application form:

1. Creation of seabed classification map

A seabed classification map was created utilising all newly acquired data. Ground-truthing data were analysed to provide multivariate statistics on community structure. These results were used as the classification units which were predicted across the area of acoustic data using object based image analysis. The results were then compared against the NPT's Coastal Atlas to identify areas of consistency and/or conflict. The classification map is of high quality and demonstrates broad agreement with the Coastal Atlas but extends the knowledge base of certain ecosystems beyond the coastal region.

2. Knowledge exchange - data accessibility

An online Geographical Information System (GIS) was created to enable viewing of the acoustic and video data using the internet. All underwater video data were uploaded to YouTube and are accessible through links within the online GIS (<http://tinyurl.com/DPLUS026>). The data presented in the online GIS were also made available on Cefas' data exchange platform 'Cefas data hub' (<http://data.cefas.co.uk>; search for DPLUS026).

3. Knowledge exchange - researcher placement

A member of the National Parks Trust (NPT) staff is to attend Cefas in October for one week prior to joining Cefas' research vessel RV Cefas Endeavour for a two week survey targeting U.K. marine protected areas (<https://twitter.com/kvs1979>). In the laboratory, the NPT partner will be given demonstrations and hands on training of data analyses and mapping techniques that were used to create the seabed classification map of the study area. The local knowledge will also be used to refine the habitat maps where necessary. Hands-on training will also be given on techniques for map creation that could be applied by NPT using software available to them. During survey the project partner's role as a member of a shift team will see them involved in all aspects of survey work from acoustic data acquisition through ground-truthing techniques to data recording and database management. These skills will be transferred to NPT work where applicable.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities (max 300 words).

1. During the partner visit to Cefas it was realised that the visiting partner did not have the hard copy of their personal survival techniques at sea training certificate which is a requirement when boarding Cefas vessels. The project partner therefore had to undergo the training in the UK prior to joining the Cefas research vessel for the exchange experience. This did not disrupt the delivery of project deliverables but was a cost (£200) that was not budgeted for. Efficiencies have been made to accommodate this spend.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance: Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: DPLUSXXX Darwin Half Year Report**